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Recent Research Abstracts

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FAMILY THERAPIST TRAINING

Tisher, M. & Jackson, L. (2003) Courses in family therapy for General Practitioners: Identifying learning objectives. *ANZJFT*, 24 (3), 121-131

This paper describes two courses which train general practitioners (GPs) in generic family therapy skills applicable to consultations with individuals, couples or families in the general practice setting, and to patients with physical or psychological problems. Based on feedback from previous participants, eight topics were identified and described as useful. These are stressors, genograms, problem clarification, options, involvement of patients, reflection on interventions, recognition of an interactive cycle and review of treatment. General practitioners' skills in these areas can be assessed by asking them to respond in writing to two case vignettes, featuring respectively an individual, and a mother-child dyad. These vignettes have been piloted in previous family therapy courses for GPs and are written as typical presentations to a GP. We give examples of pre and post-course responses of GPs undertaking a short or long course, present and discuss quantitative assessment of learning objectives using structured criteria score from 0-10 and include excerpts from a six month follow up.

Young, J., Stuart, J., Rubenstein, R., Boyle, A., Schotten, H., McCormick, F., Jorgensen, A., Halloran, K. & Pearce, J. (2003) Revisiting family of origin in the training of family therapists. *ANZJFT*, 24 (3), 132-140

Family of Origin exploration has had a controversial history in family therapy training. This article describes a process that aims to integrate family of origin work with skills development. Co-developed by a training group and their trainer, it builds on the existing approach at the Bouverie Centre in Melbourne. Family of origin work is clearly and practically linked with the enhancement of clinical skills, as argued for in the literature. Informed consent, trust and safety are taken seriously, and negotiated within the training group. Trainee and trainer stories are included and the authors discuss the learning that resulted from asking trainees to present their family of origin to the group, including the unpredictable personal ramifications that inevitably occur in such processes.

Kayrooz, C., Franklin, J. & Collins, R. (2003) Improving novice counsellors' performance by training in comprehensive problem formulation. *Counselling Australia*, 3 (3), 78-82

Novice counsellors typically learn to formulate client problems by practicing skill-behaviours. In this study, training focusing on cognitive problem formulation skills led to more comprehensive and appropriate outcomes.